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Attorney Docket No. 242.004US01

Title: METHOD FOR THICKENING HAIR, SEPARATOR DEVICE FOR RECEIVING HAIR, ASSEMBLY FOR THICKENING HAIR AND APPLICATOR FOR THE ASSEMBLY IN THE METHOD FOR THICKENING HAIR

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A method for thickening hair, comprising the steps of:
 - providing a first plurality (A) of hair extensions (C) having respective proximal ends (7) provided with a respective connecting element (9);
 - providing a first adhesive tape (2) with a first adhesive face (43) and arranging, according to a predetermined arrangement, said proximal ends (7) onto the first adhesive face (43);
 - arranging a separator device (51) at a portion of hair (T) to be thickened, so that said portion may be separated in adjacent portions (60), containing basically the same quantity of receiving hair, each portion (60) ~~being~~ corresponding to a connecting element (9) placed on said adhesive tape (2) and equidistant from the other portions (60);
 - keeping tensioned said portion of hair to be thickened;
 - providing a second adhesive tape (4) to be overlapped on said first tape (2) and enclosing, between said first and second adhesive tape (2,4), said portion of hair (T) to be thickened, arranging said connecting elements (9) at the respective portion (60) of receiving hair;
 - removing said separator device (51) from said portion of hair (T); and
 - activating a connection means (10) operating on said connecting elements (9) of the hair extensions (C),
- wherein said second tape (4) has a respective second adhesive face (44) on which it is arranged a second plurality (B) of hair extensions (C) having respective proximal ends (7) provided with a respective connecting element (9) spaced so as to overlap to the respective connecting elements (9) of said first plurality (A), said connection means being such as to simultaneously operate on the connecting elements (9) of both said pluralities (A, B) of the hair extensions (C).

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2. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein said first and second adhesive tapes (2,4) are formed by two distinct adhesive tape sections.
3. (original) A method according to claim 1, wherein said connecting elements (9) comprise a thermoplastic material.
4. (original) A method according to claim 3, wherein said connection means are activated by application of energy.
5. (original) A method according to claim 4, wherein heat is applied.
6. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of selecting the separator device (51) according to an indication (50) related to ~~the~~ dimensions, the a number and/or ~~the a~~ density of the hair extensions (C).
7. (currently amended) A separator device (51) for receiving hair, for the application of a thickening assembly (1) comprising:

a plurality of hair extensions (C) having respective proximal ends (7) provided with a respective connecting element (9);

an adhesive tape (2) with an adhesive face (43) onto which there are arranged said proximal ends (7) according to a predetermined arrangement, the separator device (51) ~~being characterized in that it comprises~~ comprising:

first separation tooth elements (52), equidistant and such as to subdivide a portion of hair into portions containing basically the same quantity of receiving hair;

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a bearing surface (53) for arranging said adhesive tape (2) in position, delimited on one side by said first tooth elements (52); and

second tooth elements (55), arranged on ~~the~~ an opposite side with respect to said first tooth elements (52), having with respect to the latter a greater density and interspaces such as to arrest the receiving hair inserted therebetween.

8. (original) A device (51) according to claim 8, wherein the first tooth elements (52) are basically triangle-shaped.
9. (original) A device (51) according to claim 7, wherein said first tooth elements (52) are positioned on opposite sides of the bearing surface (53).
10. (original) A device (51) according to claim 7, wherein the bearing surface (53) has a width equal to that of the tape (2).
11. (original) A device (51) according to claim 7, wherein sideways the bearing surface (53) comprises at least one indent-shaped stop (54) for the correct positioning of the thickening assembly (1).
12. (original) A device (51) according to claim 7, comprising at least one handle (57).
13. (original) A device (51) according to claim 12, comprising a pair of opposing handles (57), arranged sideways.

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14. (original) A device (51) according to claim 7, comprising, in a position corresponding to the second tooth elements (55), means for securing the receiving hair and the hair extensions in a preset position.
15. (original) A device (51) according to claim 13, wherein said securing means comprises a spring clasp (58) that rotates sideways to the hair.
16. (currently amended) A device (51) according to ~~one of the claims~~ claim 8 to 15, comprising a removable gripper (61), apt to receive said thickening assembly once arranged on the device (51), such as to leave free the surface of the assembly (1).
17. (currently amended) An assembly for thickening hair (1), comprising:
 - a first adhesive tape (2), apt to be reversibly adhered on hair, having an adhesive face (43) onto which there are arranged connecting elements (9) of hair extensions (C) of a first plurality (A) of the hair extensions (C) at their respective distal end (7);
 - a second adhesive tape (4), apt to be reversibly adhered on hair, having an adhesive face (44) onto which there are arranged connecting elements (9) of hair extensions (C) of a second plurality (B) of the hair extensions (C) at their respective distal end (7)[[:]], the tapes (2, 4) having positioning elements such that the connecting elements (9) of the extensions of said first and second plurality (A, B) of the hair extensions (C) overlap when the positioning elements are in turn overlapped.
18. (currently amended) An assembly (1) according to claim 17, wherein said first and second adhesive tapes (2,4) consist of distinct adhesive tape sections.

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19. (original) An assembly (1) according to claim 18, wherein said positioning elements are holes (6) arranged at the corners of the adhesive tapes (2,4).
20. (currently amended) An assembly (1) according to claim 17, wherein said first and second adhesive tapes (2,4) are substantially transparent.
21. (original) An assembly (1) according to claim 17, wherein said adhesive faces (43,44) have an adhesive of a non-permanent and reversible type, operated by pressure.
22. (original) An assembly (1) according to claim 17, wherein the connecting element (9) is made of a thermoplastic material.
23. (original) An assembly (1) according to claim 17, wherein the connecting elements (9) are substantially equidistant and placed at the center of the respective adhesive tape (2, 4), the hair extensions (C) being aligned in parallel to each other, so that the hairs of adjacent hair extensions (C) do not get knotted to each other.
24. (original) An assembly (1) according to claim 21, wherein the adhesive material used on said adhesive faces (43, 44) has an adhesive force on the respective adhesive tape (2, 4) greater than that produced on the material of the connecting element (9), so that, on the latter, no adhesive material residues remain at the end of the application.
25. (currently amended) An assembly (1) according to claim 23, wherein ~~the~~ a first face of the connecting element (9) opposite to that a second face of the connecting element (9)

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placed on the respective adhesive face (43,44) has longitudinal ribs (3), whose edges are parallel to the hair of the of the hair extensions (C).

26. (original) An assembly (1) according to claim 25, wherein each rib (3) has a substantially V-shaped section.

27. (original) A hair extension applicator (10), of the kind employed for thickening hair via the application, to the natural hair, of hair extensions (C), comprising:

a fixed contrasting element (12) bearing connecting elements (9) of hair extensions (C) on a tape (2) and corresponding portions of receiving hair (60) of hair to be thickened (7), separated and corresponding to a respective connecting element (9); and

a movable pressure element (15) acting on said fixed element (12), said movable pressure element (15) being driven by a pneumatic device operating at a predetermined pressure, apt to press on connecting elements (9) of hair extensions (C) and corresponding portions of receiving hair (60) of hair to be thickened (T) enclosed by tapes (2,4), characterized in that it comprises means for positioning the tapes (61; 64), the connecting elements (9) and the hair portions (60), in a predetermined position on said fixed and pressure elements (12, 15).

28. (original) An applicator (10) according to claim 27, comprising respective recesses (73,76) of said fixed and pressure elements (12, 15) in a position such as to receive respective connecting elements (9) when they are pressed by the pressure element (15).

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29. (original) An applicator (19) according to claim 27, wherein the fixed element and the pressure element (12, 15) comprise a respective thermistor (24, 25) at their bearing planes (13, 16).
30. (original) An applicator (10) according to claim 27, wherein the means for positioning the tapes comprises a gripper (61).
31. (original) The applicator (10) according to claim 27, wherein the means for positioning the tapes comprises indent-shaped stops (64).
32. (currently amended) An applicator (10) according to claim 27, wherein the fixed element and movable pressure-~~elements~~ element (12, 15) have respective bearing surfaces (13, 16) formed on removable plates (71, 72).
33. (original) An applicator (10), according to claim 32, wherein, below each removable plate (71, 72) there are printed, with silk-screen techniques, the thermistors (24, 25) that are electrically connected to generate heat, said plates (71, 72) being thin and of metallic material, with a high thermal conductivity.
34. (original) An applicator (10) according to claim 32, wherein the first removable plate (71) has a plurality of recesses (73) that, in a plan, are basically oval or elliptical, preset to receive the connecting elements (9) placed on a first tape (2); and wherein the second removable plate (72) has a plurality of punches (75), each corresponding to said recesses (73), the punch (75) having a configuration such as to fit the respective recess (73) and,

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onto its top, having a recess (76) of oval or elliptical shape and with substantially cutting edges (77).

35. (currently amended) An applicator (10), according to claim 27, wherein ~~the~~ a bearing plane (13) on the fixed element (12) is of a soft, pliable material.
36. (currently amended) An applicator (19) according to ~~one of the claims~~ claim 33, 34 and according to claim 36, wherein the second plate (72) has punches (75) having each a central recess (76) contoured to a twin cutting edge (81) cooperating with ~~the~~ a pliable surface of the ~~first bearing plane~~ surface (13) of the fixed element (12).
37. (new) An applicator (19) according to claim 34, wherein the second plate (72) has punches (75) having each a central recess (76) contoured to a twin cutting edge (81) cooperating with a pliable surface of the bearing surface (13) of the fixed element (12).
38. (new) A device (51) according to claim 9, comprising a removable gripper (61), apt to receive said thickening assembly once arranged on the device (51), such as to leave free the surface of the assembly (1).
39. (new) A device (51) according to claim 10, comprising a removable gripper (61), apt to receive said thickening assembly once arranged on the device (51), such as to leave free the surface of the assembly (1).

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40. (new) A device (51) according to claim 11, comprising a removable gripper (61), apt to receive said thickening assembly once arranged on the device (51), such as to leave free the surface of the assembly (1).
41. (new) A device (51) according to claim 12, comprising a removable gripper (61), apt to receive said thickening assembly once arranged on the device (51), such as to leave free the surface of the assembly (1).
42. (new) A device (51) according to claim 13, comprising a removable gripper (61), apt to receive said thickening assembly once arranged on the device (51), such as to leave free the surface of the assembly (1).
43. (new) A device (51) according to claim 14, comprising a removable gripper (61), apt to receive said thickening assembly once arranged on the device (51), such as to leave free the surface of the assembly (1).
45. (new) A device (51) according to claim 15, comprising a removable gripper (61), apt to receive said thickening assembly once arranged on the device (51), such as to leave free the surface of the assembly (1).